

extending between integrally connected ends 118, 120. Cutting blades 140A, 140C are substantially parallel to one another and have cutting edges 142A-142C that face the leading edge 114 of plastic body 112. Razor blade cartridge 110 includes a series of guard ribs 146A-146E that extend between leading edge 114 and trailing edge 116 and are integrally molded with plastic body 112. The guard ribs include a center guard rib 146C, a pair of outer guard ribs 146A and 146E on opposing sides of the center guard rib 146C, and a pair of intermediate guard ribs 146B and 146D on opposing sides of the center guard rib 146C and between the outer guard ribs 146A, 146E and center guard rib 146C. In a particular preferred embodiment shown in Fig. 4, the guard ribs are non-uniform in their dimension. As used herein, the term "dimension" may mean the overall shape, length, height, width or thickness of a guard rib. As shown in Fig. 4, center guard rib 146C has a first dimension and a pair of outer guard ribs 146A, 146E have a second dimension that is smaller than the first dimension of the center guard rib 146C. Specifically, the center guard rib 146C extends the entire distance between leading edge 114 and a bump 136 integrally connected to cap 130. Moreover, center guard rib 146C overlies the cutting edges 142A-142C of all three cutting blades, 140A-140C. In contrast, the pair of outer guard ribs 146A-146E extend only partway between cap 130 and leading edge 114. As such, the outer guard ribs 146A-146E only cover the cutting edge 142A of the uppermost cutting blade 140A. In addition, the pair of intermediate guard ribs 146B, 146D have a dimension that is greater than the dimension of center guard rib 146C. As a result, the intermediate guard ribs 146B, 146D only cover the cutting edges 142A and 142B of the upper two cutting blades 140A, 140B.

On page 13 please amend paragraph 28 as follows:

Although the present invention is not limited by any particular theory of operation, it is believed that more force is exerted on the razor blade cartridge in the vicinity of the center guard rib 146 C than in the vicinity of the intermediate guard ribs 146B, 146D or outer guard

ribs 146A, 146E. As such, the front edge 148C of center guard rib 146C is longer than the front edges of the other guard ribs so as to minimize friction forces due to drag as the cutting blades pass over a skin surface.

On page 14 please amend paragraph 29 as follows:

a2  
Figure 5 shows a razor blade cartridge 210 in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention. Razor blade cartridge 210 includes a plastic body 212 having a leading edge 214 and a trailing edge 216. A set of three cutting blades 240A-240C are embedded in the plastic body 212. The cutting blades 240A-240C are preferably substantially parallel to one another and extend between the opposing ends 218, 220 of plastic body 212. Razor blade cartridge 210 also includes a series of guard ribs 246A-246E that are integrally molded with the plastic body 212. The guard ribs comprise a molded plastic that is integrally connected to the plastic body 212. In the particular preferred embodiment shown in Fig. 5, the guard ribs 246A-246E are non-uniform in dimension. Specifically, the center guard rib 246C has a greater dimension than intermediate guard ribs 246B, 246D which, in turn, have a greater dimension than outer guard ribs 246A, 246E. As shown in Fig. 5, the front edge 248 C of center guard rib 246C overlies the cutting edges 242A-242C of all three cutting blades 240A-240C. In contrast, the intermediate guard blades 242B, 242D have front edges 248A, 248D that only cover the cutting edges 242B, 242C of the lower two cutting blades 240B, 240C. The pair of outer guard ribs 246A, 246E have front edges 248A, 248E that cover the cutting edge 242C of the lowermost cutting blade 240C.

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On page 14 please amend paragraph 30 as follows:

Q3  
Although the present invention is not limited to any particular theory of operation, it is believed that providing a center guard rib 246C a longer front edge 248C than the intermediate or outer guard ribs will minimize resistance or drag as the cutting edges of the cutting blades are drawn across a skin surface. The front edges of the intermediate and

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outer guard ribs is not required to be as long as the front edge of the center guard rib as  
less force is applied in these areas.

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